

# UPSTAIRS BULLETIN

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An Educational Group

TODAY.

Lo, here hath been dawning another blue day;  
Think, wilt thou let it slip useless away?  
Out of eternity this new day is born,  
Into eternity at night will return.  
Behold it aforesaid no eye ever did;  
So soon it forever from all eyes is hid;  
Here hath been dawning another blue day;  
Think, wilt thou let it slip useless away.  
- Thomas Carlyle.

The holidays over and gone and that ghastly month of bookkeeping - cannot say that it did slip uselessly away - however there may not be much left when Uncle Sam dips into the exchequer. The nicest thing about the holidays was old friends dropping in at this time to say hello...and the news that comes on Christmas cards. JUDY CONWAY was planning on coming home for the holidays and at the very last moment decided to try out for Brigid Cullberg in Sweden. It paid off because she is now a member of that group which we hear will tour America next year. JOHN WIDMER was hereabouts playing in "Dolly" but did not get into Chicago. KAREN FAHRENBACH is single again and living back in Racine and teaching some. It was good to see the happy face of JUANITA GARBNER WEIR and have a long visit with her while she caught up on all her own friends. On New Years day I visited her sister MARY MARGE who has a lingering illness that somewhat confines her. Also on that day I called on the ALBERTS family to visit with BILLY who seems to be as cheerful and adjusted as one could be - remember he was one of our students who had a severe case of Polio. He does bookkeeping for his father at home and he says does a great deal of reading. Sister VALERIE living in San Francisco now has a baby boy several months old. On January 7th ANDREA KUSHAR had a bouncing son of 8 pounds. And around the latter part of December GAIL & MANNY WINSTON added another son to their group. While on the subject of vital statistics KATHY HAAS married in Carson City, Nevada. Probably where she shed

the first one. MARY STALKER'S mother writes that Mary's marriage broke up last July - MARY was the lovely girl who posed for the pictures used in my Character Books on partnering...they were with PATRICK CUMMINGS who was here for one quick day on business for "Mame" - he had staged the dances and we are told that the tango in the show is entirely his choreography. We had all hoped he would be here with the show but he is still in the New York Company. DONNA JEAN MILLER (now DONNA MILLS) can be seen in the movie "The Incident" now playing a loop theater and also appears in a TV serial CBS's "Love is a many splendored thing". And we hear that JOAN KRAMER is now assistant to Thomas Andrew choreographer for the San Francisco Opera Company. We were happy to hear that ELISSA QUEYQUEP is finally back in dance - she is dance therapist at the Bronx State Hospital in New York. DEAN DIGGINS has completed his BA - graduating Cum Laude and received a teaching fellowship - he is now working on his MS in Speech pathology. JOHN SHARPE is now in Las Vegas choreographing "Little Me" for Donald O'Connor and BILL REILLY is there to dance the Sven Swenson Strip tease dance that was such a hit of the show. BILL was here for a few days and had many amusing things to tell about working with Jack Cole in "Mati Hari" which was a bomb. MARK BUGLER was in with his family over the holidays and took several classes. He has almost grown up and is dancing quiet well. Suppose he was here to meet old Nut-cracker friends who have also grown up. This year it was a new crop. MARK TRUDEAU was one of the young leads with NANCY GLYNN & CHARLENE LEVITT doing Clara with him. NANCY only got to do one performance becoming seriously ill with hepatitis and is still confined to home and rest. FRANKLIN BAK was drafted into the army not too long ago which may be a shock to some who still think of him as the young fair smiling

boy in "In My Landscape" a few years back. Have no reports on it but JAY DEVLIN broke in as an actor in Ann Arbor recently in Studs Terkel's play "Amazing Grace". MARY FORMOLA has left Chicago to join a Modern dance group in Montreal Canada and seems very happy with her chances there. Our rehearsals are mounting for the spring concerts which will be May 17th & 18th at St. Alphonsus Theatre. The actual program is not entirely decided but "The Story of Ferdinand" will be revived for DAN BADOLATO. A large cast is to be used with many new faces.

DURING the summer course of 1966 I gave a series of lectures on Dance History which bears repeating. I have always been bewildered at the lack of interest among young dancers in the background of dance philosophy - its origin, emotional and spiritual; customs, both ritual and natural; folklore, both real and faye; and in the searching out of motivations for moving in the first place. The dance has a rich and highly interesting history that can only be touched on in an article of this length. However, it can point out ways and sources to broaden the students interests.

- WC.

The origin of the word 'dance' seems to have been the round dance, or, ring; the word is first used in the romance tongues, apparently borrowed from the old high German 'danson' - meaning to stretch out. But the idea of dance as a movement stemming from an emotion goes back even further. Curt Sachs the great historian of the dance was of the belief that dancing preceded man himself - dance was to be found in the movement habits of many birds and animals.

Primitive man danced for every occasion - for birth, circumcision, the consecration of maidens, marriage, funerals, hunting, war, victory, peace, spring and for harvest. The themes were unlimited; their reasons for celebration were all related - to life - to power - abundance and to health.

We can assume that sheer physical exuberance, ecstasy, reverence or grief was the starting point for his wanting to dance in the beginning. And because man is distinguished from the other animals in that he

feels and sometimes thinks; also that in his play and work he searches for meaning and content, these impulses eventually, evolved into more complex dance patterns and even later into rituals.

The men's dances far exceed the women woman's dances in number; They alone do the hunting, war and sun dances - and most always the animal, spirit and boy's initiation dances. The rain and medicine dances were their property as well. The men's dances are essentially extravert and sensory in nature.

The women's dances are often only participant - meaning that they are as accompaniment to the dances of the men in their tribes. They take part in the dances of fertility, rain, harvest and consecration of girls, dances of birth and moon worship. The mourning dances are their special province. Their dances are intravert in character.

As these ritualistic dances developed in complexity it was inevitable that only the more proficient dancers would participate leaving the balance of the public to be audience. Thus began the use of dance as an art form. Early written and pictorial records show the Egyptian and Peruvian cultures to have reached a very high level. The use of acrobatic dancing as we know it today was first found in the early Egyptian sculptural reliefs. Most of what we know of their dancing in the past is through these early pictorial records left in their art and sculpture.

However a few isolated forms still do exist today and among these are the whirling dervishes that many of you may or may not have heard of. Many dancers in modern times have used some of this material for their concert dances with interesting results.

The dervish dancers are basically religious in character. Dervish parties were formed from a few men and boys - perhaps 12 or 20 who happened to be neighbors. These meetings were always held in moonlight, generally near full moon, a point which may connect them with some pre-Ishamite moonworship. The gatherings were

strictly connected with a devotional sentiment and usually or often were held after a death in the village. A professional dervish lead the party, all standing in a circle and they begin to repeat the word "Al-lah" with a strong accent on the latter syllable, bowing down the head at the former and raising it at the latter. They then began to move in a circle with the rate gradually quickening; accents became stronger until their voices resembled an explosive howl. The excitement grew wilder and wilder until they would break down from sheer exhaustion. After it was over they would go their own ways with a sense of devotional virtue, however wearied from this emotional excitement. Today we still have religious gatherings that resemble the gatherings of the dervish dancers in ancient Egypt, for instance the holy rollers, in earlier times there was also Shaker meetings in New England.

Now returning back into the earliest dance history, as an outgrowth of the Egyptian cultures we found that dance spectacles grew out of these early religious ceremonies and rituals. The early wall paintings and friezes show musicians and dancers performing before royalty. The variety of dance in this period of history can completely absorb one as one becomes obsessed with it, so broad was its scope.

In Greece, as well, dancing began as ritual and developed into entertainment as a form of popular expression. Their use of dance was broader. Besides the use of dance for every religious occasion, the Pyrrhic dance were developed as a training for their warriors.

The hard, stern, moral code of life in Sparta produced the finest and most courageous warriors in Greece and a race of women who were their equal in physical endurance. It was out of their military spirit that these Pyrrhic dances were developed. By the laws of Sparta, every male child over 5 had to learn these dances - and it was practiced daily in the public place. The invention of this dance is variously attributed to Pyrrhus, the Dioscuri, the Curetes and to Achilles in honor of Patroclus. It was accompanied by the flute and danced by armed warriors - who would assimilate warlike

deeds with all the proper manoeuvres for assailing and avoiding an enemy. There were 4 divisions of these dances -

PODISM - or footing - a quick motion of the feet as might be required for overtaking an enemy.

XIPHISM - or sham fighting.

KOSMOS - danced with very high leaping and vaulting - a training for the jumping of ditches and walls.

TETRACOSMOS - which was movement in a square figure with a slow majestic timing.

Lycurgus invented a dance called the "Harmos" which was graceful and lively and also a war dance. It was formed by youths and maidens alternating and representing the shape of a winding necklace. The men tried to outdo each other in the variety of their warlike positions. Their partners followed with modest and graceful steps. A leader playing the lyre regulated the movements. The dance in its entirety pictured manly courage contrasted with feminine modesty.

Homer wrote of another line dance, the Crane Dance, whose influence is still evident in the dances of modern Greece and other parts of the world. In the crane dance the dancers moved in a line as if following a thread and performed evolutions similar to those of a flight of cranes.

All Greek dances were not necessarily warlike and athletic in nature. The choral dance, often of a dramatic nature depicted the legends of mythology. They ranged from ritualistic and mimetic dances glorifying the loveliness of heaven, the beauty of sorrow to dances in which body and soul alike had their share.

Most Greek dancing had some religious significance - that of the Delian feast was especially sacred - the chorus surrounded the Atlas while the sacrifice as burning sang airs which stimulated the dancers. Many of these were imitative; such a one was that bearing the name Ajax, one commemorative of Apollo's birth, picturing the supposed amusements of his youth.

According to Lucian, in the 5th century dance reached perfection, revealing a beauty in which body and soul alike had their share.

From Greece dance history shifted to Rome where ritual dance still survived but dance related to drama was less imaginative and less important. Its entertainment value was of more importance. Dance began to be imported from the captive nations as a result of Rome's many war campaigns. In the pagaents and pantomimes in Rome one could imagine the beginnings of what we would call ballet today - however, it was a long time before one was really accomplished. Dance had much to live through before it came to flower into an art form.

Under Augustus, dance was at its highest period of favor and perfection. The Roman pantomimic dance was not dance in one sense of the word, it consisted of expressive rhythmical movements of the head and hands. The events of antiquity and the several human passions were faithfully pictured by these gestures, often moving their audiences to tears. It was under Augustus reign that the celebrated dancers Pylades and Bathyllus were appearing upon the stage. One excelled in tragic and the other in comic scenes, performing whole plays by gesture and steps alone.

After the fall of Rome the Christian Church dominated for many years and the dance was dead for centuries. As the church damned the cruel spectacles of pagan Rome it did maintain aspects of the art adaptable to religious ideas. Consequently the church did keep the theater alive and gave it a new impetus.

Dance became a part of religious ceremonies and pagaentry based on Biblical scenes was permitted. Dance was incorporated into the ritual of the mass and traces of this influence survives in certain parts of the world today.

To dance and move was such a basic thing that the church was not able to completely subdue it and in time it reappeared in the guise of folk dance at village folk festivals. And while folk dance appeared innocent enough to survive the frowns of the church its origin was still ancient tribal dances. The maypole dance for instance is a blood relation of an ancient fertility dance. This angle of the dance will be touched on later when I talk of folk dance itself.

With this rebirth of dance in folk activity the door was open for dance in the theater. History tells us of a famous banquet in 1489 given as entertainment for a Duke - his bride and their party - that was to be considered the first ballet. This spectacle lasted many hours and was composed of music and poetry - which was sung and spoken with pantomime and dancing loosely linking the central theme. The costume were lavish and the scenery, built in 3 dimensions in the center of the banquet hall was magnificent. The participants were members of the nobility and their dances were formal elegant court dances of the period. Leonardi da Vinci designed the settings for many of these festivals at the court in Milan.

Just two years later Catherine de Medici, Queen of France, presented such a pagaent to celebrate the wedding of a Duke to Marguerite of Lorraine. Actually this was the first ballet of which a printed account exists and from here on the die was cast and the idea of elaborate pagaents spread to England and other courts, and for another century ballets continued to be performed by aristocratic amateurs.

It was during the reign of Louis XIV that ballet developed most into a serious art form. He had always been fond of dancing and had appeared in many of the court performances. The name of the "Sun King" originated when he danced the part of the sun in the ballet "Ballet de la Nuit" in 1653, when he was but 15 years of age. He stopped performing at 30 but all his life was a patron of Ballet. His court attracted all the artists of the day, such as Moliere the Dramatist whose plays are still performed to this day; Lully an extremely talented man for he was dancer, violinist, composer and choreographer all in one; and the choreographer Beauchamp who was credited for first having classified and set down the 5 positions of the feet in classical dance. All three had a great part in the development of ballet and their combined productions were said to be highly elaborate but began to be hampered by untrained performers.